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THE RE A D J U S T M E N T.

A Play In 5 Acts,

by

MRS IVAR LEVINSOHN.

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Characters.

ROBERT TRENTON.

LAWRENCE ATHERTON, his friend.

WILLIAM HALLET.

WILLIAM HALLET Jr.

EDWARD CHESTERFIELD.

MABLE DURAND.

Mrs DURAND, afterward Mrs CHESTERFIELD.

Mrs TRENTON, ROBERT'S MOTHER.

BEATRICE TRENTON.

ALICE TRENTON.

LITTLE JESSIE.

ACT 1.

Reception room at Robert Trenton's house. To the left of stage a flight of stairs. In back of stage corridor, leading to ballroom. Music can be heard from ballroom.

Enter Mr Hallet and Alice Trenton.

Alice. Isn't this perfectly delightful, she dances round the room, too bad you don't dance.

Mr H. My dancing days are over, child, so don't waste your time in entertaining me when there are such a number of young men in the ball room, who would be glad to have such a sweet partner.

Alice, aside, Isn't he lovely and so fond of mother too. She laughs. Yes I suppose I can get a partner easily enough, but, er, mother is busy entertaining, she starts her foot impatiently, so she told me, no, she did not tell me, but I know you are not fond of such excitement, so I thought I would try and entertain you as best I can, but I suppose I am not excellent company. She laughs. Ah, but now I will leave you in better hands, here comes Robert.

Enter Robert, goes over to Mr Hallet and shakes hand with him.

Robert. How do you do, Mr Hallet, I hope you have enjoyed the evening so far.

Alice. Well, Robert, Mr Hallet does not dance, so I brought him in here I know he is not fond of excitement.

Mr H. Yes, so I am here being royally entertained by Miss Alice.

Alice. Then you, she bows and runs toward the corridor, it has been a pleasure to me.

Enter Beatrice. Alice throws her arms around her neck and kisses her.

Alice. You do look so sweet, Beatrice.

Mr H. I agree with your sister, Miss Beatrice, you do indeed look charming quite different than you looked when you returned from the war. I don't believe that nursing soldiers quite agreed with you.

Rob. aside to Alice. Run into the ballroom, dear, the dance is almost over. Alice slips out of the door.

Bea. laughs, no, I don't think it did. I think I made a rather timid nurse.

Rob. That is not true, Mr Hallet, Beatrice was all that a nurse should be, but when she fell ill----

Bea. Then, if it were not for my dear friend, Hallet, I should not have been here this evening.

Mr H. You are quite willing to destroy your reputation as a heroine, but I will not allow it, Miss Beatrice, Any young lady who will give her services as nurse in time of war has risked her life and I am sure, any person who risks his or her life deserves the name of hero.

Bea. If you insist upon calling me a heroine I suppose you may have your way about it.

Mr H. At any rate I am sure your brother does not regret he has given this festival in your honor tonight.

Rob. You may rest assured I do not.

Enter Mr Trenton.

Mrs T. I have been wondering where you can be, Beatrice, and here you are chatting; I am afraid I will have to take your place here, dear, while you take mine in the ballroom. I am beginning to feel fatigued.

Bea. I will go at once, mother; she turns to Robert. Will you come with me Robert?

Rob. Certainly. He offers her his arm, they leave.

Mrs T. sits down; Mr Hallet goes over to her.

Mr H. You should not have stayed in there so long, the excitement is too much for you.

Mrs T. True, I can not stand much excitement, but I am so happy tonight I have my child here again. It was a foolish move on her part to make up her mind to serve as nurse in the war, but it was her wish. I tried hard to persuade her not to go, but her mind was fully made up to go, and nothing could change her; you know Beatrice has a mind and will of her own. She went, and God only knows how I suffered. Then when she returned home, a shadow of her own self, can you imagine how we all felt. Then, after being with us only a few days, that terrible fever took hold of her, and

we despaired of her life. Can you wonder that I am happy tonight to see her well and happy again amongst her friends?

Mr H. I fully realize how happy you are tonight and I have been waiting to see you like this for some time. Grace, you know what I mean, surely you have noticed; don't look so surprised. I know you have not forgotten the words of love I whispered into your ear thirty years ago. I know, Grace, you loved me then, you almost acknowledged it, but I know you married Mr Trenton to save your father fror ruin. You see I knew it all, and have always known it but I did not tempt you, though it cost me much pain. I left this country and went to England; You did not wait long, for only two months after my departure you were married; but I did not forget so quickly, it was eight years later I married a sweet and gentle lady; but, you see, it was not to be. You became a widow, and I a widower.

Enter Robert unseen, and looks on in quiet surprise.

Mr H. So,Grace, you understand I have waited thirty years for this day Grace, will you be---.

Robert coughs.

Rob. Mr Hall, I have something very important to say to my mother, will you kindly excuse us for a few moments?

Mr H. Certainly. He bows and leaves.

Robert goes over to his mother and puts his arm around her.

Rob. Mother, I have heard the last few words Mr Hallet said---

Mrs T. Well, my son, Mr Hallet is everything a true gentleman should be.

Rob. I know that, mother, but surely you would not have accepted his offer?

Mrs T. Robert, I am surprised to hear you talk like that. A man of your age should know better. If you were to look into the matter more sensibly you would see I could do nothing wiser. Don't look at me like that my boy, I have not accepted Mr Hall's offer, and perhaps I never shall: but Robert, you do not look into the future as I do. Beatrice is soon to be married: Alice is not likely to

remain unmarried very long: then we will remain alone, you and I. You are a young man, while I am getting old. You will wish to live ridet life and splendor, while I shall be glad to see everything as quiet as possible. You will like to go out, but your conscience will not permit it, for you will know, your old mother is at home alone. Then, Robert, some day the lady of your choice will appear, and then your mother will be a rock in your path that will not be very easyly removed.

Rob. Mother, you speak as if you had the map of life printed before you. When Beatrice and Alice are married it will be my greatest pleasure to come here and find you waiting for me. That is all the the love I will ever look for. I will be happy and content with you always. You shall reign as mistress of this house as long as I live, and I will never forget my duty to you, mother, as long as I live; Now tell me you will not accept Mr Hall's offer. Will you?

Mrs T. It shall be as you wish, my boy, but I am sure you will some day wish Mr Hall would propose once more.

Rob. No, mother never.

Mrs T. Very well, dear, time will tell. She starts up suddenly. We have almost forgotten we are not alone this evening. Enter servant with card on tray.Mrs Trenton takes it and reads: Mabel Durand. She turns to Robert. Robert, Mable Durand is here, Beatrices dear friend. How strange she should come just this evening, Beatrice will not believe her own eyes.

Rob. Show the lady in, John. (John leaves). I am glad she came, we will be able to thank her for all she done for Beatrice.

Enter Mable. Mrs Trenton goes over to meet her and takes her hand.

Mrs T. You are a thousand times welcome, I am Beatrice's mother. She leads her to a chair. This is Beatrice's brother, Robert.

Robert. We are very glad to see you, Miss Durand. Beatrice has never ceased talking about you, so we were all wishing to see you.

Mrs T. And now that you are here you have come to stay.

Mable. Oh, dear, no, I did not come to stay, I came to see Beatrice before I leave for the summer.

Mrs T. We shall see; we have you here now. I am afraid you will find it a very hard task to leave us very soon. I will go and break the news to Beatrice. She leaves.

Bob. You look tired, Miss Durand, are you quite well?

Mable. Yes, I am quite well. Tell me, is there a party of some kind here this evening?

Bob. Yes, we are celebrating Beatrice's return.

Mabble. But Beatrice has been here such a long time?

Bob. Yes, but she has been very ill, we almost despaired of her life.

Mab. Poor Beatrice, she should not have undertaken such a mission. She deserves credit for the attempt, but she wasn't really strong enough.

Bea. from a distance, It is too good to be true. Enters, runs over to Mable and throws her arms around her neck. Mable, am I awake?

Mab. Yes, you are awake, in fact everything here looks wide awake.

Bob. I think you ladies would rather be alone for a little while. He smiles and leaves the room.

Mab. How beatiful you look, quite different to when I saw you last.

Bea. But you dear, dress does not seem to change you, always lovely.

Mab. There you are again trying to make me vain.

Bea. That would be hard, Mable, vanity is not in your line; but come, we must put all this aside, I have much to ask you, and no doubt you have much to tell me. We have no time for that now, you must change your dress and come help me entertain.

Mab. you do not think I carried a trunk in my hand, do you? and besides I cannot stay here, my ticket is bought. you don't think I would come up here this of the night if I could come here in the morning? No dear, I must go at once.

Bea. What a pretty speech, and do you really think you can do so

you please now, no indeed, not if had to order every door in the house bolted. I rule here tonight, Mable, so come along with me you will change your dress. Yes, don't look that way at me, you know my clothes fit you; don't you remember when I came in one night drenched to the skin you gave me an entire uniform of your own, and you laughed so hearty when you saw how they fit me, and you said "now you may make for Mable Durand if you wish?"

Mab. smiles. Your memory is very good.

Bea. Come along, come with me; no one will suspect that you just came She takes Mable by the hand, and leads her up the stairs to the dressingroom.

Enter Alice and Hamlet Jr.

Will. You can say what you like, but I can plainly see you are neglecting me this evening.

Alice aside, Jealous again. To him: Indeed do you think so, well I hope you don't expect me to apologise?

Will. Well, no, not exactly apologise, but I would expect you to say something.

Alice. Of course you would; I don't expect you would have me dumb for the rest of my life.

Will. No, Alice, that would be impossible in your case.

Alice. There you are again, snubbing. I tell you I am tired of your finding fault with me; besides I don't wish to make any excuses for neglecting you this evening.

Will. Oh, very well. I am sorry to have hurt your feelings, Alice, so I will rid you of my unbearable presence.

He bows and leaves.

Alice. Now I have made him real angry, but that does not matter. He loves me, dear chap. Doesn't he look brave, when he stands up like a man to defend himself. I like him best when he is angry, that is, when I am the cause of it.

Enter Bea. goes over to Alice.

Bea. Alice, dear, run in and tell mother I will come as soon as possible

I am waiting for Mabie. Mother has no doubt told you.

Alice. I know, but mother says Robert will escort her to the ballroom. Your friends are beginning to miss you.

Bea. Very well, I will send Robert to meet her.

They leave. Enter Robert and Lawrence.

Rob. Sit down and cool off, Lawrence,don't be so infernally foolish. I am downright glad I have no one to be jealous of. It must be a horrible desease to be afflicted with, he laughs, You look like candy in the sun.

Law. You are having KXXX a fine time at my expense. She has promised me the waltz, and now the lanciers after that is almost over, and she has not appeared in the ballroom. Do you think that just?

Rob. Well, no, but there are some exceptions to the rule, Lawrence, Beatrice is not to blame this time. You have heard of Mabel Durand, Beatrice's friend?

Law. Yes, but what has she to do with this?

Rob. If you will stop walking up and down like a madman I will tell you.(he stops and goes over to Lawrence). Now you look better, Miss Durand arrived here a little while ago.

Law. Really?

Rob. Yes, really.

Law. Well, that does account for her absence.Have you seen her?

Rob. Yes, I spoke to her.

Law. Is she really so beautiful? You know, Beatrice said she was positively bewitching.

Rob. There now, it will soon be time for Beatrice to be jealous, for she is very beautiful. But there is a very sad expression in her eyes,which are almost as blue as heaven in the daytime.

Lawrence starts to laugh very heartily, and keeps it up for some time.

Rob. What has gone wrong with you? Has that jealous spell relieved you you of your senses?

Law. No, he laughs, but this is jolly good, say that every again, he laughs. I can't believe my own ears; did I hear you say you

saw the color of the young ladie's eyes? You, Robert, you?

Rob. I say, Lawrence, I suppose the world owes you nothing,you are so happy.

Law. It does, it owes me a great deal; but this is so rich, I could laugh for a week. I say, Robert, this lady must be a wonder, since she has attracted your attention long enough for you to notice the color of her eyes, he laughs.

Rob. I think you need a doctor.

Law. No, I think it is you who needs a doctor's advice, come now confess, a doctor in the form of Cupid. You need an advise, don't you?

Rob. Yes, I do need an advise, Lawrence, but not from a doctor this time, it is from you.

Law. Very well, out with it, we can't stay here very long.

Robert goes over to Lawrence and puts his hand on Law.'s shoulder.

Rob. Try and be serious, I have something very important to say to you.

Law. I am serious, I am all attention.

Rob. We have trusted each other with our secrets since we were boys, now now I have another secret to trust you with.

Law. Well, I am waiting to hear it, out with it.

Rob. You were present when my father died. You heard him say: Robert take my place, be kind to your mother, try to make the rest of her life as happy as you can; I promised, do you think I have failed in any way to keep my promise?

Law. No, I think you have made a perfect slave of yourself both at home and in the office.

Rob. Well, now I am at a loss for words. You will be surprised when you hear it.

Law. I am waiting to hear it; for Heaven's sake, we can't stand here all night.

Bob. I hope you won't think less of her when you know.

Law. Know what? Out with it.

Bob. My mother contemplates marriage a second time. Are you not surprised?

Law. I am surprised that you did not tell it to me sooner.

Bob. How could I tell it to you any sooner, when I only Heard it today?

Law. You don't mean to tell me you had to be told?

Bob. How could I guess it, I am no mindreader.

Law. (laughs), No, of course not; but I forget you do not notice such things. A man who is not in love never does. I do. Say, Robert, did you never notice how foolish Mr Hallet looked at times?

Bob. I see you know who it is.

Law. Of course I do; but tell me, I hope you are not displeased about it?

Bob. Do you think I ought to be happy to see my mother marry again, to see another man in my father's place? Didn't you say I had kept my word? I have tried hard to be worthy of my father's chair at our table.

Law. Yes, you are that a good son should be, but what has that to do with her marriage? You can take the place of an obedient son but never that of a husband; for it is the duty of a husband to be at his wife's side untill his or her dying day, but it is the duty of a son to be ~~XXXX~~ at his mother's side only untill Love comes into his life.

Mable opens the door; both men look up. Suddenly while Mable walks slowly down the stairs, Robert goes over to her.

Bob. Miss Durand, allow me to introduce to you my friend, Mr Atherton.

They bow.

Law. Miss Trenton has gone into the ballroom, I surmise she awaits you there. Will you allow me to escort you to her?

Mable. Thank you.

She takes his arm, they ~~XXXX~~ walk towards the door while Bob stands amazed, looking after them.

Bob. How beautiful.

Curtain.

A C T 2.

Garden scene outside Mrs Trenton's house.

Enter Mrs Trenton and Mr Hallet.

Mr H. I suppose you are tired, I think I have overtaxed your strength, I should not have walked such a distance with you, but the time seemed so short. I did not realise [illegible] we walked so far.

Mrs T. I am not so very tired for all that besides she takes out her watch it is only twelve. We have a whole hour before lunch, so we can sit out here and rest.

She sits down on a bench beneath a tree. The bench stands so it can not be noticed by anyone coming down the stairs.

Mr H. It is much cooler here than up that stony road.

Mrs T. It seems so because we are not walking, but I believe it is just as warm here as anywhere else.

Mr H. I think you are right. Come to think of it, I had almost forgotten to tell you that Will can not be with us to lunch. He has some very difficult studies to look after this afternoon.

Mrs T. Well now, and I have ordered fresh mushroom for him, I know that is his favorite.

Mr H. Too bad, had I known you were so thoughtful I would have induced him to study some other time..

Mrs T. We will not have many to join us at lunch today. Alice is up in her room with a headache, she sent down this morning asking us not to disturb her; I will not worry her, she will no doubt be down this evening.

Mr H. Well, if that is the case Will would have been lost all afternoon without Alice. They laugh.

Alice comes down the stairs, she does not see them.

Mrs T. That does not look like one of those very bad headaches, let us see, what she is up to. They move further behind the tree.

Alice. I wonder does mother suspect? I fear I have made a mess of the whole thing. She walks nervously up and down. Oh, I am so nervous, if Will keeps me waiting very long, I shall go into hysterics. I thought it would be real fun to go with Will for a whole afternoon, but it is not very funny after all. Just think. of it.

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Mother thinks I am shut up in my room with one of my severe headaches. Well at any rate I will not be caught as far as that story goes; she never comes up to my room when I am ill. She knows I prefer to be alone; but Will. And his father believe him to be at home studying so hard.

Mr H. under his breath: The rascal.

Mrs T. The little fraud.

Alice. Well, that part of it is rather funny, but---

Enter Will.

Mr H. I thought he would not disappoint her, the chance was too good.

Alice. Oh, here you are, Will, I am trembling from head to foot, I wish we had not planned this.

Mrs T. We will not spoil their game, it is so innocent. They laugh.

Alice. startled, I am sure I heard a sound.

Will. Most likely some bird.

She looks around as if freightened

Alice. You will be sure to bring me back home safe before dark?

Will. Of course, you know I must be at my desk hard at work, when father comes home, and he said he would be home at seven.

Mr H. The rogue. I did not believe him capable of such an act.

Alice. Moving with Will towards the gate, What a lovely storyteller you would make.

Will. Let's be off; time is precious today. They run off.

Mrs T. and Mr H. come forth.

Mr H. We must not anything, Grace, you know the old saying: All is fair in love and war.

Mrs T. True. Well, I hope they will enjoy their day.

Mr H. Speaking of war, that reminds me. How is Miss Durand today?

Mrs T. She is just the same; sweet and gentle, but never happy like other young people of her age. I sometimes think there must be something weighing on her mind.

Mr H. Of course there is. The scenes she has witnessed are not easily for-gotten.

Mrs T. I suppose that is so. She was there to the very last, while

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Beatrice was compelled to return when sickness overtook her.

Mable opens the gate; she walks in and goes over to Mr H.

Mab. Good morning, Mr Hallet. You kept your word, you are just in time for luncheon.

Mrs T. Yes, dear, Mr Hallet has been here for some time. He has been inquiring about your health.

Mab. How kind of you. I am feeling quite well.

Mr H. I am glad of that. I hope it will continue. She smiles.

Mrs T. I think we had better go in now. It is almost one.

Mr H. And I assure you I will do justice to those mushrooms.

They laugh and walk towards the stairs.

MrsT. Are you coming in with us, Mable?

Mab. I will follow you directly. I have received some mail that I am anxious to read.

MrsT. Don't be long. I know you are not fond of cold vegetables.

They leave. Mable goes over to chair and sits down.

Mab. How they all love me. If they only knew. If they only know what this letter contains. She opens letter and glances over it. Oh, mother, if you only knew how much I need your advice now. You have written this letter, but how little you know, that though my heart is breaking for the sight of your dear face again, I do not know how to act. She begins to read aloud: My darling child. For all these months I have tried to console my self with the thought that you are well and in the care of such dear friends; but that does not satisfy a mother's heart. I cannot bear it any longer. I must see you even though it may cause trouble for us both. Do not blame me, my daughter, I would gladly die one more t after I had seen you, after having held you in my arms. I will come tomorrow afternoon. You may introduce me a your distant relative or friend r anyway you wish. It will be a hard trial for us both, but it must be. I will

not rest untill I have seen you. Your heartbroken mother.

She drops her head on her hands on the table and weeps.

Mother, poor mother. I have been cruel to you. I should not have left you alone. I have been selfish, have thought only of myself. I am selfish even now. I am here surrounded by such good people; I have luxury and splendor, while you poor mother, you are alone, alone and longing for to see me. She rises and crushes letter in her hand. You shall see me, mother, I care not what it may lead to. We can do no more than suffer, and we are both accustomed to that.

Enter Robert. Mable puts letter in her bosom.

Rob. Alone, and thinking of something that makes you unhappy as usual. I have guessed right?

Mab. No, not altogether. I was reading a letter from a very dear friend.

Rob. I see. You would rather be alone.

Mab. No indeed, I have finished reading it, and besides I could not treat you so unkindly today. You are not from business often, and although the excuse of meeting a friend at home satisfies your mother, I know it is not so. I know you are not well; own up, you see I have guessed this time.

Rob. Well, yes, you have guessed right. I am not quite well today; but that does not say you must be kind to me. Must sounds so hard; but with all that I am going to make the best of my bargain. Since you must be kind to me, you may begin right here. The only way you can please me is to try and look happy.

Mab. aside, If he only knew, He would not ask that.

She goes over to him. If that is all that will make you happy rest assured I will try. She smiles.

Rob. That was a good beginning. I suppose that was the way you looked before those soldiers were fortunate enough to be shot, and then be nursed by your hands.

Mab. Don't say that. It was I who was fortunate to be able to assist her.

Enter Law. Goes over to Mable.

Law. You are looking quite well today, Miss Durand.

Mab. Thank you, I feel quite well. She goes over to Robert. I promised your mother I would follow her directly after she left, but I failed to keep my word. The fault is yours. She smiles.

Rob. I will take the blame, but you must keep your word to me. They smile. I think I am beginning to feel better already.

He leads her to the stairs, she goes in, he looks after her and sighs.

Law. I wonder if I ever looked as foolish as that. His disease today is lovesickness. Let me see. Did I ever stay home from business with a fit of lovesickness? I don't remember. I say there, patient. Robert startles as from a dream. Let me fee your pulse. Your case is quickly diagnosed:You are in love. He laughs.

Rob. Well, what of it. But who told you about it?

Law. laughs, Who told me? You just go over to that mirror, and look into it the same way you looked after Miss Durand a few moments ago, and there will be no need of asking me who told me.

Rob. I do not deny it. I do love her.I love as no man ever loved woman before.

Law. Whew. Itis even worse than I expected.Robert, your time has come You will no longer laugh at me. You will now find yourself doing all the little foolish things you used to tax me with.He laughs. But I will be serious.I have something to say to you. I did not come to you for an advise before I took the step you are now anticipating. That was because the lady of my choice is your sister; but, Robert, the lady of your choice you know nothing of. You don't know her family, you don't know where she came from, in fact you don't even know her, for if you did, you would notice how carefully she is guarding a secret, that is eating her very heart.

Rob. I do notice she has a secret, I see also she is guarding it

closely, but that is no reason I should not love her.Perhaps, when she will consent to be my wifeshe will find it her duty to trust me with her secret. Then, only then would she realize how much I love her; for I will protect her with these strong arms, he throws out his arms with force, I will use them to keep all harm from her. As home was protected by it's stone walls so will I protect her, if she will only let me.

Law. Perhaps you are right. I see the piece of china is broken beyond mending, so it is of no use to talk. I wish you luck, Robert, you know I wish you well.

Mrs T. enters, Why Lawrence. How do you do? How do you come here this time of the day, you don't often leave the office so early?

Law. Well, I was somewhat worried about---Robert nudges him with the elbow, Law. looks up surprised, he coughs. Hm, yes, that is I was wondering, yes that's it, not worried but wondering, why he did not get back to the office; but I know now.

Mrs T. I see, you supposed the gentleman Robert was to meet had left, and you were surprised he had not returned to the office.( )

You You all know my boy as well as I do,he will not stay home from business, unless it is absolutely necessary.

Law. to Robert quietly, What is she talking about?

Rob. to Law. quietly, Leave that to me.

Rob. Mother, the gentleman has just left, but the conversation was so

Law. aside, Full of love.

Rob. Full of business that it left me with a severe headache. I will not return to the office today. I will go up and take a nap.

He walks towards the stairs,and turns round.

Rob. Mother, if you see Mable please tell her not to forget her promi to me.

Mrs T. I hope it was not Mable that caused your headache?

Law. aside, Oh, yes, it was.

Rob. No,mother. No fear of Mable doing anything to harm anybody.

He goes in.

Mrs T. to Law. Beatrice will have a pleasant surprise; she did not

expect you untill this evening. You will find her in the library

Law. laughing, It will not take me long to find her.

Mrs T. smiling, No, I suppose not.

Lawrence goes upstairs.

Mrs T. takes up some embroydery. Poor Robert. How little he dreamt when he asked me to refuse Mr Hallet's offer that he would be in love so soon. Cupid would never come his way he said; he will always be happy with me; but now he is happiest with Mable. And I ? I am happy too, when he is with her, for I know how much he loves her. Even though I would remain lonely for the rest of my life, I would be happy to know he is married to the woman he loves. That is how the world goes. No matter how much the child idolizes the parent they cannot find it in their heart to sacrifice themselves for the parent as the parent can for the child.

Mable walks in slowly. Mrs T. looks up.

Mrs T. Oh, there you are. Come here, Mable, I have a message for you.

Mab. startles, For me? aside, Maybe my mother has been here.

Mrs T. Yes, for you from Robert. Mable gives a sigh of relief.

Mab. Really, what is it?

Mrs T. aside, I know she loves him. to Mab. He asked me to remind you that you had made him some promise.

Mab. laughs, I have not forgotten it. I suppose he told you what that promise was?

Mrs T. No, my dear, he did not, and I did not ask him.

Mab. I promised to try and forget the past, and smile as often as possible.

Mrs T. I hope you will keep your word. I should so much like to see you happy like Beatrice.

Mab. goes over and takes her hand. You are all so kind to me. I wish I could feel in my heart that I am deserving of one half of your kindness toward me.

Mrs T. Mable, I forbid you to talk so to me. Why, we could never repay you for all you have done if we lived forever. You have saved the life of my child; if it were not for your untiring care

she would have died out there on the battlefield. You nursed her through her fever, and when she was well enough to walk you sent her home to us.

Mab. Yes, but Beatrice became very ill again after she reached here, and she is now well without my assistance. She smiles.

MrsT. You forget, out on that dreadful field she had no mother to nurse her; you were her mother then, so I will now be your mother. (Mable staggers.) What is it, dear, are you ill?

Mab. No, just a little unnerved by our conversation.

Mrs T. How foolish of me. I forgot the memory of it worries you. There, there, we will never speak of it again. Look pleasant, dear and don't forget your promise. Walks toward the stairs, I think I will go and rest, we old people need it, you know. Smiles and leaves.

Mab. Oh, God, what shall I do? I have deceived these good and kind people. Will I be able to see my mother here and introduce her as my friend? Can I do that? No, it is not possible. Oh, mother, my heart is breaking. I do so want to see you here, to hear your voice again. But I would rather die than see you in that manner. You are my mother, how can I receive you as my friend?

She takes the letter from her bosom and reads:

"I will come sometime tomorrow in the afternoon"

That means, no doubt, as soon as all her scholars have received their lessons. Poor mother.

Enter Beatrice, who goes over to Mable and taps her on the shoulder. Mable startles.

Mab. How you frightened me, Beatrice. I thought it was my---- she stops short----I thought it was Robert.

Bea. Of course. You are always thinking of Robert. You think of him even in your sleep. She laughs.

Mab. What do you mean?

Bea. laughs, You see it does not pay to be nervous, and ask me to sleep in yout room. Tell me, What did you dream of last night

when you said "Robert" so many times in your sleep? Now, there yo you are, trapped. Confess.

Mab. What would you have me confess?

Bea. That you love him, Mable. Come now, why do you hide anything from me? You know how happy I will be to see you Robert's wife.

Mab. Beatrice, you have been too kind to me; I did not deserve it. I have gone too far, but I will try and stop any further misfortunes that I am likely to cause. Yes, don't look at me as if I were suddenly gone mad. I am not quite mad yet, but the chances are I soon may be. I have a little story to tell you. Will you sit down and listen? It is not a short story either, but I will try and use as few words as possible.

Bea. I will listen to you, Mabel; but tell me what has gone wrong. You frighten me.

Mab. If you will listen you will learn; don't interrupt. Let me finish my tale, and then you may pronounce your sentence. You are the judge, I am the prisoner.

Mab. About twentythree years ago there lived in England an aristocratic family. They had only one daughter and she was very beatiful and gifted with many talents. She had suitors of all descriptions, but she accepted none, for she had already given her heart to an American gentleman. He was very handsome and clo clever, and knew how to win her heart. He asked her father for his consent but met with a stern refusal. The old gentleman was not so easyly deceived; he studied young Chesterfield, and soon became aware of the fact, that he was a lightheaded, deceitful young man. He told his young daughter her lover's faults, but she did not heed him. She saw no faults, for she loved him, she saw only how handsome he was, and how kind he was to her. She did not suspect he wished her money, not herself; so when he came to her, pleading for hand, childlike she asked him what could be done. Then the coward's time to triumph had come. "We can marry secretly" he told her; for when it is all

over your parents will see there is no use in protesting any longer. They love you too well to lose you, so they will forgive you". That innocent victim believed him and trusted him. She went with him and they were married. It did not take him long to find out that he had made a mistake. The old gentleman was unyielding. As she has made her bed, so she shall sleep, he said. What was to be done? The young husband took his bride to America; he brought her to a little country-home; and after living there a short time, he began to reproach her for being poor. She noticed he no longer loved her, and then it dawned upon her that he was keenly disappointed at her having been cut off with a shilling. Her love turned to hate, so when he told her he must leave the cru country she was not sorry. Her only words of reproach to him were: "why did you not leave me to my dear parents?" And he answered, "because I wished your money". He told her she was never married to him, it was a mock marriage, gotten up by some of his friends. Those were the last words he said to her, and they rang in her ears for the remainder of her life. Now tell me, Beatrice, do you pity her or do you despise her?

Bea. Despise her? How could anyone despise such an innocent victim? I pity her with all my heart, and wish I could help her.

Mab. Thank God for that. And now for the rest of my story. Beatrice, I will have to run over a period of twenty years. How those twenty years were spent only God knows. The forsaken wife gave lessons in French and German. In a way she was happy, for she had a daughter who was her all. They loved each other dearly. The daughter was brought up to believe her father dead, and her life was full of love and simplicity untill one day two gentlemen appear. They are intryduced as friends, friends of her mother. They call often, untill once, by accident, the daughter overhears a conversation between her mother and one of them. She is my child.

and I will tell her so.The mother pleaded with him not to tell. She is sweet and pure; do not spoil her young life; I have suffered much at your hands, but will bear more, if you will only spare my child. I will spare her, he answered, if you will persuade her to accept my friend's offer. He loves her and is ric and if she will become his wife, we will all be happy.-----
Here the young girl rushed in; never, never, she cried. I will never marry your friend. What is more, I will never call you father. Oh mother, cried the young girl, tell him he does not speak the truth. The mother could not speak. Tears were her answe But he spoke up for her. Yes, I am your father, she cannot deny it, he said, pointing at the mother.Now, child, you may not believe it, but I love you as much as every father does his child I wish to see you happy. Imagine, Beatrice, a man like that telli ing his daughter he loved her. It almost made her laugh. She looked him straight in the eye, and said with determination, Soon er than marry your friend, I would destroy my young life. I will suffer anything rather than please you. As you treated my mother so will I treat you. At this he flew up and said: Then take the consequences. You have no name, your mother was never married to me, willingly she went with me, and the world shall know it. At these terrible words the mother sank almost lifeless at her daughter's feet. The young girl in her moment of grief dd did not know what to do, Attend the mother, or kill the man who had so wronged them. Regaining her willpower, she said: Leave this house at once; if you remain here another moment, it will be at your peril, for I will kill you. Coward like he left. She then quickly ran to her mother, and lifted her tenderly. Poor mother, how you must have suffered. The mother opened her e eyes, and said: you do not blame, darling; and the answer was a tender caress. After a few days letters began to arrive, asking If the girl had made up her mind. What could she do? I must

rid you and myself of that terrible man, she said.I will go away, and then he will have no cause to worry you.The mother knew it wo would be best. Where will you go so ~~as~~ that he can not molest you, she asked? I will go with the brave soldiers to war; I will nurse the wounded. There at least I will be ~~from~~ free from him, and at the same time I will be useful to those that are afflicted Beatrice, need I tell you more, don't you understand? I am that girl; I have deceived you all. Yes, now turn from me. Go, tell the world I have lied to you all; if I have sinned by deceiving you I am ready to pay for it.

She throws herself on the couch weeping; Beatrice goes over to her.

Bea. Mable, I thought you knew me better. I loved you as dearly as a sister before you told me your story, and now

Mab. sits up and looks at her anxiously. And now?

Bea. If possible, I love you more.

Mable jumps up and throws her arms around Beatrice.

Mable. After all you have heard, Beatrice?

Bea. You were not to blame, nor was your poor mother. You were both the innocent victims of a bad man. You deserve pity; and anybody who would turn from you, having heard your story, is heartless.

Mab. Then you will befriend me still?

Bea. To the end of my life. But tell me,dear,what do you intend to do now? I fully understand you have something in view.

Mab. Yes, I have. She takes letter out ~~of~~ her bosom, and hands it to Beatrice. Read this.

Bea. reads it

Bea. Well, Mable, that is not the worst that can happen. Your mother is welcome, and if you like we can introduce her as your friend I know it will be hard, but under the circumstances it is the best, that can be done at present.

Mab. Yes Yes, it is best, but now I will--

Dea. A lady is coming. No doubt it is your mother. Be a brave girl.

Mable runs to meet her mother; they embrace. Mable weeps.

Mab. Mother, this my dearest friend, Beatrice Trenton.

Dea. goes over and takes her hand, then kisses her.

Dea. I am very glad to meet you, Mrs Durand.

MrsD. How can I ever repay your kindness?

Dea. By not saying anything about it. She goes over to Mable. I am sure you have much to say to each other, so I will leave you to yourselves; but if anyone should happen to come, you must be brave. She smiles at them and leaves.

Mab. placing chair for her mother and stool for herself. Come, mother let us sit down as we used to, before he came. Mrs D. sits down. Now, mother, tell me all about yourself. How have you been, have you been well?

MrsD. Yes, child, I have been well; I have been living in the hope of seeing you again, and it is realized. I am almost too happy to speak.

Mab. Poor, mother, I have been selfish. I have been surrounded by friends, while you were all alone.

MrsD. No, dear, I am not alone. You know I have my little scholars coming and going all day, and then little Jessie is with me most all day. After you left she came to me and tried hard to console me. I will stay with you, she said, and try and be real kind to you, and she has kept her word. She has been with me in my lonely hours.

Mab. How kind of her. Well, we have both had friends in our trials. Tell me, mother, when did he come to see you last?

MrsD. Not very long ago, dear. He came one day when I was out, and somehow he got into the house. When I returned I found fifty dollars in gold on the table with a note, which read: I hope you will use this. It is honest money. I hope you will believe me when I say I am sorry for what I have done.

Mab. A means to outrun you, I suppose.

Mrs D. My dear, I can not say anything in your father's favor to you; but I think he speaks the truth when he says he loves you.

Mab. No wonder he had little trouble to ensnare you. You are always willing to believe the best of every one, while I can never forgive a wrong. You say he loves me; why then does he force upon me a marriage, that he knows is hateful to me?

MrsD. I believe he thinks you might have considered the matter; but you simply refused, because he was his friend.

Mab. It is as said before. You are too willing to believe everyone; but it is time you have learned your lesson. We will not speak of him any more; we are both too happy for that just now. Tell me, how did you pass away your lonely hours after I left home?

Mrs D. In watching the mail, and hoping to see you again. This is like a dream, Mable.

Mab. I fear our dream will not last long.

Mr H. and Lav. are supposed to be seen walking along the lane.

Mrs D. jumps up, Mable, who is that tall dark gentleman?

Mab. Why do you ask, mother? He is a very dear friend in this house; his name is Mr Hallet.

Mrs D. staggers. My God, Mable, his father was my father's best friend, and he knows me almost as well as you do. What shall we do, can I leave here unseen by him?

Mab. No, mother, you are too late. He will be here before you can reach the gate; but stand firm, mother. You are much changed, he may not recognize you. Be brave for my sake.

MrsD. I will, dear. She braces up as if ready for the trial.

Enter Mr H. and Lav.

Mr H. to Lav. Too bad, Robert does not feel well. He looks up suddenly. Beg pardon, ladies. He starts back. I, I did not know

Mab. whispers to her mother: Hold out if you can.

Mab. Mrs- or- Hendrik, allow to introduce to you Mr Hallet and Mr Atherton. She turns to the two men. Mrs Hendrik is a very dear friend of mine; she has known me from childhood.

Lav.

Law. to Mrs Hawkirk.(This name assumed while in Trenton's house.)
You look ill, madam. Pray, be seated. He places a chair.

Mrs Haw. Thank you, I am not ill, only tired. I have travelled many mile today, and I am not strong.

Mab. Yes, travelling does tire her so.

Law. to Mr H. We are not wanted here: let's get out, if we can.

Law. to Mable. Has Robert come down from his room, Miss Durand?

Mab. I don't think he has, at least I have not seen him.If you wish you might go to his room, and see if he is there.

Law. aside: She is anxious to get rid of us, to Mr H. Will you join me Mr Hallet? We will look for the patient.

Mr H. Certainly. As they near the stairs, to himself. I wonder what Lord Craversom's daughter is to Miss Durand? She does not wish to be recognised. Strange, there is some mystery here.

Law. Come along, Mr Hallet. They leave.

Mab. You were right, mother, it was a dream, and now it is over. Mr Hallet knows you, I can see that.I cannot flee from here I am a prisoner from his call: they have all been so kind to me. I know it is my duty to go home with you, but I cannot, I dare not. I must stay here and make some excuse for my leaving: but oh you shall not suffer alone any longer. Come what may, I will be selfish no longer. I will come to you, dear, and will share your trials, and I will try and make you as happy as can be. Mother, you do not know what it will cost me to leave this place, but I will go where duty calls. She weeps.

Mrs D. Mable,You shall stay here, while these kind people wish to keep you. A mother must sacrifice more than a child, besides it is through me that you suffer. I must go now, dear,no one else must see me here. Be brave, my daughter, all may be well yet. A mother's prayers are often heard.

Mab. Oh, how can you leave me so soon?

Mrs D. It is for your sake. It was my selfishness that has caused you this trouble: but I could not help it. I have learned a lesson now: I will be more self-sacrificing in the future.

Mab. As if that were possible.

Mrs D. I must go now, dear. God bless and spare you, my child. If a mother's prayer can make you happy you will yet be happy some day.

They walk toward the gate.

Mab. I can't be brave: I can't bear to see you go. My heart is breaking.

Mrs D. For my sake be brave. I hear voices, child. I must go.
She kisses her again and again, and runs out.

Mab. Mother, come back to me, don't leave me. She falls fainting. Her mother turns back, but as she does so, Robert appears on the stairs. She stands still, looking at Mable. Robert comes do down the stairs, goes over to Mable and pickes her up,saying, She has not kept her word.
The mother puts her hand over her mouth as if to surpress a scream, then turns and runs out.

Rob. lifts up Mable's hand and kisses it:How I wish you would trust me.

Curtain.

A C T 3.

Drawingroom in Mrs Trenton's house.

Enter Mr Hallet and Lawrence.

Law. Yourself allow me to congratulate you, Mr Hallet, you are indeed a lucky man to win such a prize as Mrs Trenton.

Mr H. Thank you, Lawrence, I am lucky indeed.

Law. You are not sorry you took my advice, are you?

Mr H. No, indeed. If I had not taken your advice I would have been back in England by this time.

Law. Well, speaking candidly, thanks are not due me , but Miss Durand. He laughs.

Mr H. I suppose you are right. I know Robert is in love with her, and it is only now he realizes what love is.

Enter Alice.

Alice. Oh Mr Hallet. Won't you please go out into the garden,mother is there all alone nursing a sick headache. I was there with her but Will came, and, well, then, of course you know the rest.

Law. aside, He won't need much coaxing.

Mr H. Why of course I will. Anything to please you.

Law. Anything to please himself, he means.

Mr H. goes out. Alice goes over to Law.

Alice. I say, Lawrence, can you give me the definition of the word Love? I think you know all about it.

Law. Well, er, yes; I think I do. Let me see. Love means something like this: First, a man begins to find himself doing things he found fault with, when others did as he is doing now. Then you begin to wish there was nobody alive, while you and your sweetheart are together. Alice shakes her head with approval. Third; you find yourself saying yes to many things where no should be said.

Alice. laughing. Right you are, Lawrence, and Will must be madly in lov with me; for when any of you came in I have heard him say I wi

W Wish they were all dead for a little while. Law. laughs. And when it comes to saying yes where no should be said, well, I guess he does that always!

Law. Really? Then he is surely in love. They laugh.

Alice. I say, Lawrence, it is jolly good fun to be loved. We can do just what we please, and we are always doing what is just perfect. Isn't that so, Lawrence? She runs to the door. He is waiting for me, but an absence always makes the heart grow fonder I always let him wait. She laughs and runs out.

Law. takes out a cigar, and lights it. Well, there is no denying I have told her the truth.

Enter Robert.

Law. Have a smoke, Robert. I hate to smoke alone. He hands Robert a cigar, then lights a match and gives it to him.

Rob. I suppose you have heard the news?

Law. Of your mother's engagement to Mr Hallet?

Rob. Yes. I see you know all about it.

Law. Of course I do. If you had your way about it Mr Hallet would have been back in England by this time.

Robert goes over to Lawrence and puts a hand on his shoulder.

Rob. I am glad he did not go back to England for his own sake. I understand he loved my mother, before she became Mrs Trenton, which is more than thirty years ago. Poor fellow, how he must have suffered. Think of it. For thirty years his heart was pining for the woman he loved. Well, he is certainly a man of more willpower than I possess. I could not wait thirty days longer in this suspense.

Law. The, why don't you speak? You love the girl in spite of all my warnings. Now don't fly up like a rocket; I have said nothing that I do not mean for your benefit. If love her why not tell her so, instead of walking around here like a somnambulist?

Rob. I have tried it often, but she seems to know what I am going to say, and like a flash she will find some excuse to drift into another subject.

Law. Perhaps you are mistaken. Perhaps she does not love you after all

Rob. I am sure she does; I can read it in her eyes. Yes, I know she loves me; but it is that miserable secret that keeps us apart. If she would only trust me, how gladly would I be her slave.

Law. Poor fool. Just like myself.

Enter Mable and Beatrice with parcels, which they throw on the table.

Bea. I am sorry I induced Mable to go shopping with me today. The stores are packed almost to suffocation.

Mab. I did not find it, on the contrary, I quite enjoyed it, especially at the bargain counters.

Law. to Rob. aside. Take a chance again; speak to her.

Bea. Oh, by the way, Lawrence, I bought that inkwell for you. I did not forget it this time.

Law. Thank you; how kind of you.

Bea. Don't mention it; it was no trouble at all. I sent it C.O.D. They laugh.

Law. to Bea. Try to find some excuse so we can leave them here alone; Robert wants to speak to her.

Bea. to Law. Very well. She goes over to Mable. Mable you may stay here while I go upstairs and get things ready for the theatre tonight.

Mab. You shall not go alone; I will go with you. You shall not wait on me like that. One might think I am ill.

Bea. It is not that; but you are not strong, and you need rest after shopping, so you will remain right here. She runs to the door. Remember, you can't come in till you have rested.

Law. aside. Now she is gone out I am still here; how am I going to get out?

Law. loud, I had almost forgotten; I promised Alice a box of sweet I must get them for her, or she will tell tales out of school He goes to the door, passes Robert and says, Now is your chance. He leaves.

Mab. I shall soon begin to think I am an invalid, for Beatrice insists she will not allow me to exert myself in the least. I wonder can she ever realize how much I love her?

She gets up, goes over to mantle, and takes from vase a fresh rose. [redacted]. To whom do they belong?

Bob. To you. I thought you would like to take a few jack-roses with you to the theatre this evening.

Mab. Oh, thank you. How beatiful they are.

Bob. They are no more beatiful in your eyes than you are in mine.

She looks up with a start.

Bob. Don't look at me as if I were your executor. I have not said these words out of idle flattery. Mable, I love you. I am sure you have known it for some time; I did not hide it, and I am proud of my love for you; but don't, for God's sake, don't stand therewith such a terrible look in your eyes. Say something; tell me you love me a little in return for my great love for you.

Mab. grasps the chair for support. Mr Trenton, if you really love me I know my answer will cause you much pain; but before I go any further I beg of you to believe me when I say I would rather die a death of agony, than cause you a moment's pain; but I cannot accept your offer, for your own sake; I - I - do not love you (he staggers,) as a woman should love the man she is to marry. I love you as a dear, kind friend, but

Bob. You cannot mean what you say; Surely I have read it in your eyes have noticed it in your actions. I cannot have dreamt only to awake and find my dream of love shattered. Mable, say you are jesting, you wished to see how I would take the disappointment; but don't jest any longer; you see I cannot bear it.

Mab. I- I- am very sorry, Mr Trenton, but I am not jesting; I am in earnest. Aside. God help me to utter this falsehood.

Robert sits down on chair, his arm hanging over back of same, and face resting against arm. Mable goes over to him, takes

the rose in her hand and kisses it; he does not see it.

Mab. I know you are suffering now, but it is better now than later. You will in time forget, and will sometime say to yourself how foolish I was to love a woman who did not return it. Don't, I beg of you, don't make my burden harder; Don't let me see you suffer, I cannot bear it. I cannot be your wife, and it is for your sake. I wish to see you happy; happy as you deserve to be. I would rather die a thousand deaths, than see you unhappy for the rest of your life. I know you cannot be happy with me. (He looks up at her.) I know I cannot make you happy without love.

Bob. stands up. Mable, I will always call you by your christian name. You will let me do that? She nods her head. One hour ago I cherished a hope in my heart, which I would not have sold for millions. Now, he puts his hand to his heart, there is a vacant spot, which will never be filled. No other woman shall take your place in my heart, and remember, Mable, you told me you love me as a friend; then you must let me be your friend in return. Whenever you will need a friend I shall always be ready. If ever you are in trouble, come to me; trust me, Mable, I am your slave. He bows and leaves.

Mab. goes over to mantle, rests her arm on it, and weeps. Merciful Father in Heaven. Teach me what to do. I love him, oh! how I love him. I am breaking my heart to shield his good name. Takes his photo from mantle and kisses it. Robert, if you only knew. Your honest face speaks to me out of this little frame. It says: My wife must be all I believe her to be; she must be stainless. I must not blush for her. Puts picture back.

If men would only stop and think how their offspring suffer for their sins, there would be few girls deceived; there would be less misery like my own. No, misery is not the word; there are no words that tongue can speak, that would express my feelings now. Throws herself on couch, and weeps.

Enter Beatrice. goes over to Mable, and puts her arms gently around her.

Mab. Beatrice, don't attempt to comfort me, my heart is broken.

Bea. Mable, you have done wrong; I hope you will not regret it.

Mab. Never. He shall not drag his good name down with mine. He must not marry a woman without a name. I have told you who my father is. If he were a good man he would not have done so base an act. I must be prepared that he may hunt me down to revenge the so-called wrong I have committed in not accepting his friend's offer. There is no telling what he may do. He may denounce me to the world as a woman, who had done wrong; and although his accusations would be false, Robert would suffer by it. No, Beatrice, do not tempt me. I must suffer alone; but I will be repaid, feeling in my heart, I have done justice to Robert. Don't make my burden any harder. I will go away.

Bea. You are not going to leave us?

Mab. That is just what I intend to do. I beg of you put no more stones in my path; it is rougher and harder even now than you imagine. Yet I must go, for his sake as well as my own. He must learn to forget me; he must not be tortured with my presence. Can you imagine what it is to see the one you love constantly, and know your love is hopeless?

Bea. Poor Robert.

Mab. You have always been a good a sister to Robert; You must do something now that I know will be hard for you; but you will say to yourself it is for his sake. You must try and convince him that his love is hopeless, that I never loved him, that I was simply thankful for his hospitality.

Bea. I fear you ask too much. I cannot break poor Robert's heart. You may think he will forget, but I know him better, he will never forget. They hear voices.

Mab. Someone is coming.

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Enter Mrs Trenton and Alice.

Mrs T. Why, children, you will be late for the theatre. She looks at

Mrs T. What has happened?

Alice. aside. I'll bet Robert failed.

Bea. Nothing, mother. Mable feels a little upset. She has just received a telegram from a relative who is very ill. she must go there at once.

Alice. aside. How cleverly she manufactured that story. It's all off, and Mable is going away; that's the long and short of it.

Mrs T. But surely Mable does not have to go unless she wishes to.

Mab. I do wish to go, though it grieves me much to leave you all.

Mrs T. You will not stay there very long?

Mab. Who knows? I may be compelled to stay longer than I should like to. This relative of mine is ill; I do not know the result but I must go, it is my duty. Surely you will not ask me to shrink from my duty?

Mrs T. No, dear, you are right, so I will not detain you. When are you going?

Mab. I leave on the nine thirty train.

Mrs T. Then you have not much time to lose. I hope Robert will be back in time to see you to the station.

Bea. Mable does not wish to see Robert before she leaves. She will write to him from her friend's house.

Mrs T. to Alice. I understand, she does not want to hurt his feelings She does love my boy. How he will miss her, if only for a few days.

Alice. aside. What little sense mother does possess.

Mrs T. as Beatrice whispers something in Mable's ear: I see, I think I had better leave you to yourselves. She walks toward the door Mable goes over to her.

Mab. Let me kiss you before you go. She kisses her, then falls on her shoulder, weeping.

Mrs T. You act as if you were going away forever.

Mab. Don't say that. I hope I will not be away from you very long. You are all so good and kind to me, I cannot part from you even if for a short time.

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Mrs T. Don't you mean you cannot part from him? Mable looks up

Mrs T. There, there, I do not blame you. I know what it is to love; so bear up, child; Come along Alice and help me get some few things ready for Mable to take with her.

Alice. I will follow you directly, mother, Mrs T. leaves.

Alice, to Beatrice. Beatrice, come kiss me quick.

Bea. I shall be only too happy; but tell me what do you mean?

Ali. I mean that you are not the only girl who can be engaged.

Bea. What are you talking about? Child.

Ali. Child no longer. An engaged young lady is no longer a child. She puts her hand in her pocket, takes out a ring, and holds it up to ther. This is my engagement ring. Mable and Beatrice look at one another. You look at one another as if I were a freak.

Bea. We are only surprised, dear, and it is but natural we should be; you are so young.

Ali. Never too young to be happy; but why don't one of you ask me who the lucky man might be?

Mab. That is hardly necessary, for Mr Hallet JF was not very careful in hiding his feelings.

Ali. No, I don't think he is; he just can't help it, he tells me. She goes to the door, then turns back. Don't tell mother just yet. She leaves.

Mab What a dear she is. I hope no dark cloud will ever cross her path. She goes over to mantle, and takes Robert's picture; Mable. You will give me this, that I may at least see his image? She kisses it. Robert. If you but knew what it costs me to leave you like this. She weeps.

Bea. Aside. Poor Mable.

Mab. My heart is broken.

Bea. Takes out watch. It is almost seven o'clock, and we have much to do. Mable starts, and wipes her tears.

Mab. Yes, we must hurry. I must leave here before he returns. I will help Susan pack. You had better remain here. In case Robert comes you can find some excuse to send him out again for a little while. She leaves.

Bea. How I wish I could help her. If she would only stay? But no; she is right after all.

Enter Law.

Law. I have just heard that Mable is going away. Well, this is sudden; I suppose we will have no theatre party tonight.

Bea. Of course not; we will see her to the train.

Law. Why is she leaving so suddenly? the story your mother told me is good enough for her to believe, but not for me.

Bea. I can only tell you she was suddenly called away.

Law. Really? Well now, I knew that much before I asked you.

Bea. Lawrence, Mable is my dear friend; I hold a secret of her's; you would not have me betray her, would you?

Law. No, dear; I would not. You are a staunch friend.

Enter servant with card.

Servant. A gentleman to see Miss Durand.

Bea. Show the gentleman in. Servant leaves.

Bea. I wonder who it can be. She grasps Lawrence by the arm. I am sorry I asked this man to come in, but----

Enter Chesterfield.

Chest. I hope I am not intruding. I was informed I could see Miss Durand in this room.

Bea. I will send her to you. Pray, be seated.

Bea. and Law. leave.

Chest. looking around. So, this has been Mable's home since she returned? Well, she seems to have been in good hands. I am glad of that. Robert Thenton is certainly a good fellow. (He sighs.) Poor girl. I cannot make her believe that I am not as black as I am painted. I would gladly begin to lead a new life for her sake, if she would only let me. How that child has wound herself around my heart. The sight of her

face makes me feel like the most humble of all creatures on earth.

Enter Mable. She looks up.

Mab. So you have found your victim at last?

Chest. Yes, and I assure you it was no easy task. You are well worth all the inconvenience I have been put to. Now, if you will continue to go on as you have begun we will get on without a quarrel. I see you are quite different from your mother; She would become hysterical and faint. That I cannot tolerate.

Mab. No, I don't think you did tolerate it very long; and what is no worse; you did not stop and think that you were the cause of it; but before we go any further I want it understood, that I do not wish to hear one word against my mother.

Chest. I am proud of you, Mable; you are a good child, and your mother is amply repaid for all her trials, in knowing you love her so well.

Mab. Do you think I deserve special credit for that?

Chest. Well, er, yes, since you were brought up without a father, with the teachings of a mother only.

Mab. Thank God for that; for I could not be taught much good with a father like you to teach me.

Chest. Don't talk like that to me; I did not come here to annoy you. I will go away from here if it pleases you; no one shall know what I am to you. You look surprised; you doubt me, and I do not blame you. You have suffered much at my hands. How can you trust me now? Ah, Mable, I know I have sinned, sinned beyond pardon, but I am still your father. The word may sound hard and hollow to you, but how I long to hear you call me father just once.

Mab. How foolish you talk. The word in itself is nothing more than the word chair or table. The word father is only sacred when uttered in reverence; it must come from the heart, not from the lips alone, and I am sure you do not expect that from me. Can you expect a child who has never enjoyed a father's caress

who never heard that father speak kindly to the mother, can you expect me to allow that word to pass my lips?

Chest. I see you are hard and unrelenting; but I must tell you, whether you will believe it or not. I love you better than any father ever loved his child; I love you and pity you for all you have suffered at my hands. I have never known the true meaning of the word love until I saw you. Then a feeling came over me, that I could scarce understand. In place of the hard and unbending nature I possessed a soft and tender feeling crept over me. She is my child, I could hear myself say; I am her father, but she will not even touch me. Her very look tells me how she hates me; but all that did not change my love for her.

Mab. And it is because you love me so that you threatened to expose my mother, unless she persuaded me to marry the man I hate?

Chest. I did that because I love you, child. I know you did not refuse Mr Crosby because you hate him, but because he was my friend. He is a true gentleman, is wealthy, and loves you well enough to make you his wife. I understood that you could not do better than marry a true gentleman, and I was sure you would have considered the matter if your mother would have urged you. I thought that perhaps by threats you would marry him, and though you would loathe me at first you would bless me afterward; for I am sure you would have found your husband all that is kind and good. I did not believe that you would rather leave your mother, whom you love so well. If I had known I would not have threatened; I was sorry, but it was too late. Mable, I have something to tell you, something about my life. Will you listen?

Mab. I will listen.

Chest. My father was a gentleman. He was rich and respected, and -- fell in love with a ballet girl. He loved her too well, and that love was his ruin. She returned his love, but only while

his money lasted. When she had spent his last dollar she left him, and took her baby with her. I was that babe. Her intentions were to go back on the stage; she could earn plenty of money, for her beauty and talent were much sought after; but God punished her for her sins against her husband. She became ill, stricken with paralysis, and she could not work. How we lived untill I was old enough to work only God knows. My mother could not bear her burden; she hated poverty. If it were not for me sh she would have ended her life when she became ill; but she loved me. I was the only being on earth whom she really and truly loved. She would often say to me: Edward, live for gold. See what we are because we have none. Don't mingle with the poor, they have no right to live, they only exist. When we had wealth, we had friends, and now, and now, do you hear? she would scream. Don't care how you get it, but seek gold, if you wish to live differently than you live now. I soon began to feel that she was right, for I could not even afford to give her proper nourishment We were so poor, and I resolved to take the lesson my mother had taught me: to get rich. When I seventeen my mother died; I could not even give her a proper burial. Then, more than ever, I made up my mind, I must have money. I worked hard, but could get no further than making a living. Once fortune favored me; I rescued a lad from a runaway horse. He took me to his home, and-- It was there I met your mother. This lad was her cousin. When I entered the house I saw and understood what my mother meant by wealth. It mocked me from every corner, and I thought to myself, If I could but remain there. Then came the introduction to your mother. She was a beatiful girl, and I do not tell an untruth when I say, that I thought I fell in love with her. I played my cards well; I must win her, I said, for she has wealth, and she is beatiful. This is the chance of my life, and I must take it. She soon fell in love with me, but her father would not listen. I then took a desperate chance. I induced her to

elope with me; I was sure the old man would forgive his only chi child, I knew how much he loved her; but instead of forgiving, he cut her off with a shilling. My disappointment was more than I could bear. Perhaps, if we had something to live on, I would have made a better husband. By this time your mother was aware of the fact that I married her for her money, and she began to hate me intensly. She was not sorry when I told her I was going to leave her. I left her, but I did not know she was about to become a mother till I returned. I never knew of your existence untill I first set my eyes on you.

Mab. But you told me you were never married to my mother?

Chest. That was not true. I told her that, so as to induce you to marry Mr Crosby.

Mab. lifts her head, and looks heavenward. Thank God for that.

Chest. goes over to Mable and puts his hand on her shoulder. Mable, I have come to you to atone for all the wrong I done to you. I did not go to your mother, for I knew it would be useless; she is hard and unforgiving. Perhaps, if she were otherwise, she mi might have made a better man of me. Mable, it lies in your power to make a better man of me, it will be a case of a child teching the father, instead of the father teaching the child. Come, dear, take me home to her, that we might at least be happy together for the remaining years of my life.

Enter Robert.

Rob. Edward Chesterfield. How came this profligate here?

Mable takes her father's hand, and goes over to Robert.

Mab. This gentleman is my father. He came to take me home.

They walk towards door. Robert looks amazed.

Curtain.

A C T 4.

Diningroom in Chesterfield's country home. Snowstorm can be seen through window. People can be seen going from church. Organ is heard playing. Fire is burning brightly in the grate.

Mrs Chesterfield arranges some flowers in vase; looks out through window.

Mrs Ch. How I wish Mable were among those happy people? If she were only a little stronger. There I am selfish as usual. Should I not be thankful to see her out of bed, and to know she is coming down today to celebrate her birthday? I suppose most mothers are selfish.

A little face is seen at the window.

Jessie. May I come in, Mrs Chesterfield?

Mrs Ch. Of course you may. She opens the door. Jessie comes in.

Jessie. My, but it is cold today.

Mrs Ch. Almost too cold for you to be out. You are not very strong since your last spell of bronchitis.

Jessie. I could not stay indoors today; I know it is Miss Mable's birthday, and I just could'nt help coming in and wishing her many happy returns of the day. May I go to her room and see her?

Mrs Ch. Certainly, my dear. Jessie runs out.

Mrs Ch. Whoever cannot bear a burden, cannot live to be happy. How true this has proven itself in my case.

Enter Mr Chest. with a large box of flowers in his hand. She takes the box.

Mr Che. It is colder than you can imagine, Clara.

Mrs Ch. opening box. Yes, I think it is; we have such a delightful fire, one can scarcely notice it is so cold out. Box is opened. How beatiful. How pleased Mable will be. Puts the flowers in vase on table. Now she will see them as soon as she opens the door.

Mr Ch. puts hand in pocket, takes out a small box, opens it and goes over to his wife.

Mr Ch. Do you think she will like this? I know pearls are her favori

Mrs Ch. Edward, I am afraid you have been a little extravagant.

Mr Ch. Don't worry, Clara. The time is past when I do not think of the morrow.

the morrow.

Mrs Ches. goes over to hir.

Mrs Ch. Edward, this happiness is like a dream, I sometimes fear I will awake, and find it all at an end.

Mr Ch. Never, dear, while I live and have strength. Why, I only now beginning to live. He laughs.

Mrs Ch. If you will bring Mable down now she will enjoy this pleasant fire. She so loves to see a bright fireplace.

Mr Ch. Then she takes after her father, for I love it too. He leaves.

Mrs Ch. Dear Mable. She is the cause of this readjustment. If she only could be happy, as we are, but she loves and I fear it is hopeless. Beatrice says nothing about hir when she calls, and, I suppose, he will never marry Edward Chesterfield's daughter. If we could only wipe out the past; or Mr Trenton could see Edward and judge hir as he is now.

Mable's voice is heard: No, you shall not carry me this time. I am quite able to walk, if you will hold my arm.

Mrs Ch. openes door.

Mrs Ch. Slow, dear. So, there you are.

Mable appears; puts her hand on side of door. Notices flowers.

Mab. How lovely. Who sent them to me? You did, of course. She looks at her father, smiling. How foolish of me to ask.

Mother and father assist her to chair by table.

Mab. How beatiful it all looks down here. Everything seems to nod and say: welcome, Mable; we are glad you are here again.

Mrs Ch. Your imagination is not far from being right. I am sure, if everything could speak, that is just what it would say.

Mr Ch. goes to window and draws aside the curtains.

Mr Ch. Look, Mable, this is our first real snowstorm.

Mab. turns and looks. How grand; but I fear that storm will help to cause me some disappointment today.

Mrs Ch. I understand what you mean. You expect Beatrice today. Does she know it is your birthday?

Mab. I am sure she does. She gave my beautiful necklace last year,

and told me she had noted the date, so as never to forget it. She said: no matter where you will be, if it will be possible I will see you each year on your birthday. She puts her hand on table; it touches bracelet. What is this? Picks up card and reads: From your dear parents. Looks up at her father. Father come here, till I get through scolding you. He walks over to her, smiling. Now you have been extravagant.

Mr Ch. You are surely your mother's daughter. That it just what she said; but have no fear, dear, I paid no more for it than I could afford.

Mrs Ch. looking out through window. I see a carriage, that seems to be coming this way.

Mab. That might be Beatrice. Mother, please let me go to the window, so she can see me standing up. It will make her so happy.

Mr Ch. I don't think it can harm her. Do let her come, Clara.

Mrs Ch. Just as you say. They go over to her.

Mrs Ch. takes her by the arm. Now be careful, Mable, if any harm comes to you of this I shall be to blame for letting you have your own way. They walk to window. Mable looks out.

Mab. It is Beatrice. She is waving her handkerchief. She must have an seen us; yes, there she is.

Mr Ch. openes door. Enter Beatrice, her arms full of bundles.

Bea. I am sure if mother had more boxes hand she would have filled them all. She throws the boxes on the table.

Mab. Now come here, dear.

Bea. goes over, kisses Mab. and Mrs Ch.; then shakes hand with Mr Ch.

Bea. In my exitement I have almost forgotten to congratulate you, Mable. She goes over. Now another kiss, and many happy returns.

Mr Ch. You must sit down now, Mable. You know your punishment for being disobedient. He smiles.

Bea. By the way, this is your first day downstairs, is it not?

Mab. Yes, my first day in the sittingroom.

Bea. You should not stand up then.

Mab. I just wanted to see you coming.

Mrs Ch. leads her to a chair. Bea. removes her wraps; Mr Ch. takes them and leaves the room.

Bea. What a lovely fire you have here. She goes over and puts her foot on rail.

Mrs Ch. That's right, warm yourself; you must be quite cold. I will get you some tea or coffee. Which do you prefer?

Bea. Tea, if you please.

Mrs Ch. Very well, you shall have some in a moment. She leaves.

Mab. Now tell me all about yourself, then about everybody else. She sighs.

Bea. I have not much to tell about myself, but Lawrence, well, he is the best husband on earth.

Mab. Of course he is.

Bea. Only this morning we had a little quarrel; but it did'nt amount to much. I did not have much time to sulk; he gave in so quickly. They laugh. The poor dear always gives in, even I am wrong.

Mab. And no dout you are always wrong. They laugh.

Bea. I almost forgot to tell you; Alice is really engaged; mother had to give in at last. Why, the child began to waste away.

Mab. sadly, I do not blame her.

Enter Mrs Ch. with tray, puts it on table.

Mrs Ch. Come and drink this while it is hot.

Bea. Thank you. She moves to table and prepares her tea.

Bea. How long have you been down here, Mable?

Mab. Quite some time.

Bea. to Mrs Ch. Is she allowed to spend the whole day downstairs?

Mrs Ch. Indeed not. She must rest for some time if she wishes to take dinner down here with us.

Bea. Then, Mable, it would be best if you went upstairs now. It is almost eleven, and you have'nt much time for rest. Come now, don't pout. What must be cured, must be endured.

Mrs Ch. Beatrice is right. Come along. I will help you.

Mab. I wish I could have my own way. I hate to go up there again.

Mrs Ch. Only for a little while. You can come down again, when you have rested. Leads her to door, goes out with her; then turns back. I will not be long, Beatrice. Leaves. Door closes.

Bea. It was hard for me to refrain from saying anything about Robert but I dare not. Goes over to mantle. His picture. She would not part with that for worlds. Well, you will not be obliged to kiss that cold picture any longer; you shall kiss his real, dear face. Little do you know, Mable, how he has suffered.

Mrs Ch. enters. So, now she is comfortable; but I don't think she will sleep; she is busy thinking. You know what her thoughts are.

Bea. Yes, I know whenever I come it awakens old memories; that is why I did not come more often. It was for her sake, I knew she was ill; but now, she goes over to Mrs Ch. now she shall not pine for him any longer. She is strong enough to see him, and sh she shall see him.

Mrs Ch. astonished. You don't mean to tell me he is; oh, I must have misunderstood you.

Bea. You did not misunderstand me; Robert will see Mable today.

Mrs Ch. My God, I hope I am not dreaming.

Bea. You are just as wide awake as I am. If you will sit down for a few moments, I will tell you all in as few words as possible, ffor we have not much time to spare. They sit down.

Bea. The cause of Mable's refusal is best known to yourself. Robert loved her better than she knew. He would have come to her the day after she left our house, but she told him she did not love him. I told him the same, for I knew Mable was very ill. When the doctor said that no one could see her for months, what could I do? I dared not tell Robert of her condition, for then he would have suffered more than he did. He thought she was well, and that was one consolation to him. I then made up my mind not to tell him the truth until Mable could

see him and speak to him. I know if I told him that she loved him, and that what she told him was to save him from her, because, well ,never mind that now. I told him all yesterday. Luckily there were no trains running, for I told it to him at ten o'clock last night, or he would have rushed right here. Then we agreed upon my coming first, for I told him Mable is not very strong.

Mrs Ch. But Mable told me you had promised her never to tell?

Bea. I promised to do what is right, and I think I have done it.

Mrs Ch. How can I ever repay you.

Bea. By saying nothing about it.

Mrs Ch. If a mother's blessing can do any good, you will certainly have that.

Mr Ch. enters. It is still storming out. I went to see whether Mrs Higgins would let her two little girls come over. I promised I would call for them; but when I got there I found one of them ill, and the other one would not come alone.

Mrs Ch. Dear little things, how they will miss the little dainties they expected to get.

Mr Ch. Never mind; I will see that they get their share. I will fill a basket and send it over with Mary.

Mrs Ch. That's right, no doubtthey poor little things were planning this day for a long time. Now they will not feel so disappointed.

Bea. I think we had better see about getting the table set. Aside to Mrs Ch. We have not much time to spare before Robert will be here.

Mrs Ch. We will begin at once.

She goes to sideboard, takes out tablecloth, while Bea. removes vase and other things from table. Mr Ch. puts wood on fire.

Mr Ch. We must keep the fire bright, Mable likes it to burn like this.

While he is stooping Mrs Ch. whispers to him: Robert Trenton

will be here soon. He drops the logs and looks up; then looks at his wife for a few moments.

Mr Ch. Does he know all?

Mrs Ch. He knows everything.

Mr Ch. And he will marry our daughter?

Mrs Ch. nods her head. Yes. Continues setting the table.

Bea. I do wish it were all over. I think I am getting a little nervous about Mable. I fear it will be too much for her; at any rate she shall be prepared.

Mrs Ch. I will leave that to you. I know you will be careful.

Mr Ch. There, that fire will last for some time. I will fill the basket for the Higgins children, and Mary will be back in time to serve dinner. He leaves.

Bea. Poor Robert is in the train. He looks out of the window and wonders, why the train is moving so slowly. He wishes his journey were ended, when it is only beginning. I know just how he feels, I have been there before him. She laughs.

Mrs Ch. I wonder if Mable will ever know how much you have done for her

Bea. There you are again saying things I do not wish to hear. Shall we call Mable down? She has not been upstairs very long, but it was long enough to prepare you. They laugh.

Mr Ch. enters. Now I am ready for your commands, ladies.

Bea. Thank you, we have finished.

Mr Ch. Very well, then I will place the chairs, while you go up for Mable.

Mrs Ch. I will see that everything is ready. She leaves.

Bea. And I will go up for Mable.

Mr Ch. So, Robert Trenton will be my son-in-law.after all. A man need not remain a profligate all his life. Mable, my child, has made me what I am. How I wish I could live my life over again that I could be what I am now. I often asked myself the question:

how could you have been so cruel? and the answer came to me, first, because your wife did not try to make a man of you, she believed me a hopeless case; then, there was no Mable to kiss me and call me father. The sound of that word penetrates my very heart.

Enter Mrs Ch. with tray of fruit; places it on table. The door opens slowly; Bea. and Ma. come in. Bea. leads Ma. to table.

Mab. If you would not have come up when you did I would have come down myself. It is quite selfish of you to send me up there all alone, when you are all down here together.

Bea. Jealous. Well, we shall not annoy you any more. Shall we, Mrs Chesterfield?

Mrs Ch. No, you may stay now for the rest of the afternoon, if you wish.

Mab. smiles. How nice.

Mr Ch. You may sit next to Mable, Mrs Atherton.

Mab. Mrs Atherton. How that sounds; it is the first time I have heard you called by your marriage name.

Bea. Yes, it is the first time you have heard it; but I wish it to be the last time I hear you say it, Mr Ch. To you all I am Beatrice. That sounds better from all of you; and I want to feel at home here.

Mr Ch. As you wish, my dear Beatrice, nothing will suit me better than to see you perfectly at home with us.

They sit down. Enter servant with tray. Places it before Mr Ch. while Mrs Ch. serves relishes.

Mab. I am too hurry to eat, mother; I wish you would not give me such large portions.

Mr Ch. Puts portions on each plate. I will certainly do justice, Clara, I am almost starved. He laughs!

Bea. I am very happy, Mable, but not too happy to eat. These sweetbreads are delicious. You have not forgotten my favorites, Mrs Chesterfield.

Mrs Ch. I always try to get them, when you are expected; Mr Ch. is also

also very fond of them.

Bea. That accounts for the sweetbreads, doesn't it Mable? They laugh. Enter servant with tray; removes used dishes.

Mrs Ch. I suppose you can all guess what this is; today is Mable's birthday, and she must get something of her choice.

Mab. Then it is chicken pie.

Mrs Ch. You have guessed it, and you shall have a double portion.

Mr Ch. Too bad it is not my birthday. They all laugh.

Mrs Ch. No fear, Beatrice, for their appetite; you shall not suffer; you shall have all you can eat.

Bea. The long and short of it is, we are all as hungry as wolves. They all laugh.

Mab. I never expected to enjoy my dinner so much; for the storm almost made me feel sure you would not come. I did not think Lawrence would let you go out.

Bea. laughs. You have hit the nail on the head, for that was the fuss I told you about. He said, don't go, dear; and I said, I will go, dear. Then he said, don't you think it is too stormy, my love? And I said, it matters not how stormy it is, my love, I will go. Then he became angry. I shall stay here all day and keep you company, if you stay, he said. It is not you your company I seek today; today is Mable's birthday, I said. Then he kept quiet, took his hat and said: good bye, dear, I need hardly tell to enjoy yourself, for I know you will, when you see Mable; but I saw he was angry, so I went over to him and said: you are not angry, dear, are you? and the dear fellow said: well, er, no, and off he went.

Mab. But then he left in anger?

Bea. Oh no; he walked down a few streets and thought the matter over, and went in to a florist and sent me a beatiful bunch of roses and these few daisies. I knew what he meant. He knows when I am in good humor I like to ask the daisies questions; I have not had time just yet, but we will ask questions together, Mable.

Enter servant withtray.

Mab. I fear you have been naughty on my account.

Bea. Don't worry, Mable, I can be naughty enough on my own account. They leave table, laughing. Mrs Ch. helps servant; Mr Ch. puts chairs in place.

Bea. to Mab. When everything is cleared away, and your mother and father leave us for their little nap. I will tell you so many things fror home that will interest you. To Mrs Ch. Can I help you?

Mrs Ch. Thank you, we have almost finished.

Servant leaves with all dishes. Mrs Ch. puts cover on table. Mr Ch. puts flowers on table.

Mr Ch. We must not forget these.

Mab. No indeed, they are too lobely to forget.

Mrs Ch. to Mr Ch. Edward, we will leave Beatrice and Mable alone. You know how they love to tell each other stories of their past life.

Bea. This time of the future. She laughs.

Mr Ch. Then we will not disturb you; I think we can find something to talk about, can't we, Clara? Mrs Ch smiles. They leave.

Mab. Now I am ready to hear all the news.

Bea. Well, first of all, Alice has broken her engagement.

Mab. Why, what on earth has come over that child?

Bea. Nothing; but since mother married Mr Hallet, Will is always in her company, and Alice says she is convinced he is treating her her more like a ~~sweetheart~~ sister than a sweetheart.

Mab. laughs.How foolish; but I suppose they will soon make up again.

Bea. Oh yes; but in the meantime Will is very unhappy.

Mab. Poor Will, I am so sorry for him.

Bea. goes over to Mab. and puts hand on her shoulder.

Bea. You are sorry for Will, Mable, do you know of no one else, who deserves more sympaty than Will?

The train is heard whistling in the distance.

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Bea. aside, The train is in; I must hurry, he will be here directly.

Mab. looks at Bea. surprised. Why do you say that to me now? You have never said a word to me before.

Bea. Because you were ill, and I did not wish to remind you; but now you are stronger. I have often wished I dared ask you, but I could not. She goes to window, glances out, then returns to Mab. Mable, you are an invalid no longer, and I need not fear to ask you: have you no little message for Robert?

Mab. looks sadly at Bea. What message can I send him? You might tell him I am well and happy.

Bea. But that is not true, and I know you never will be without Robert.

Robert comes to window; Bea. sees him.

Mab. What strange words. One might think it is my fault.

Bea. It is your fault, for if you wished it Robert would be at your side this very moment.

Mab. Knowing all?

Bea. Yes, knowing all; knowing that you love him.

Mab. surprised. You did not tell him?

Bea. I did.

Mab. You promised.

Bea. I promised to do what is right, and I think I have done it.

Mab. Poor Robert.

Bea. slips over, and unbolts door. Robert comes in, and goes b behind draperies. Bea runs back to Mab.

Bea. Why, Mable, I had almost forgotten I had brought you a birth-present. How stupid of me.

Mab. I wish for no better birthday present than your own sweet self.

Bea. I shall be judge of that; wait till you see this present. Now, dear, close your eyes, so. She puts her hand over Mable's eyes, and signals to Robert to come forth. Takes his hand and puts it in Mable's. Slowly she draws her hand away from Mable's eyes. Mable looks slowly at hand. Bea slips out of room. Mable turns slowly round, then looks up and with a sigh allows Robert to embrace her.

Rob. And you pleased

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Rob. Are you pleased with your birthday present?

Mab. The dearest and best I could wish for.

Curtain.